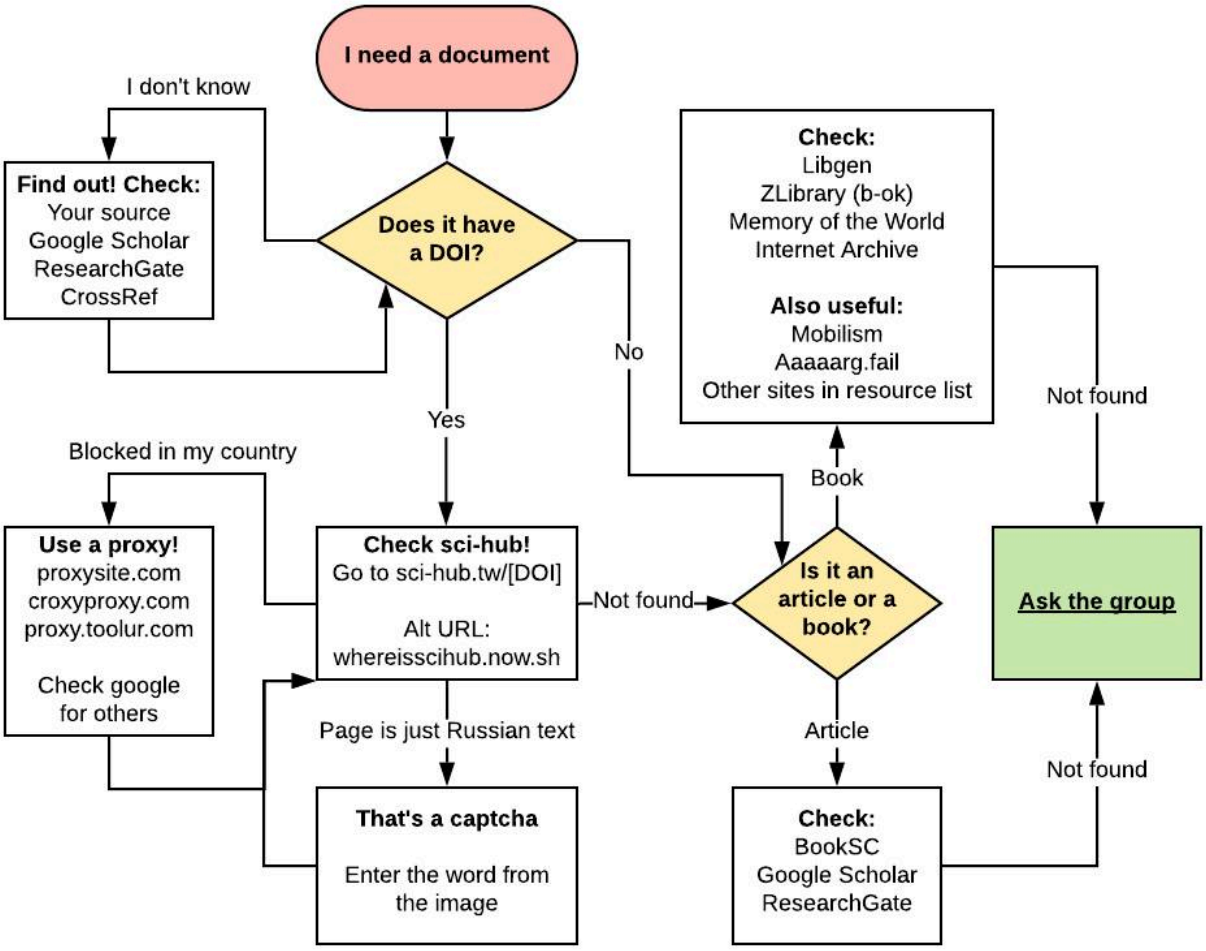
So, you need an article or book? Sci-Hub and/or Library Genesis probably have you covered! (Lee esta guía en español.)



This guide, styled in the same way as the Guide to Finding Films, is designed to help locate articles and books. Thanks to Avery Mensch for the graphic above.

Background

- What is Sci-Hub?
    - (Wikipedia link) tl;dr — a website that bypasses many (not all!) academic paywalls to access articles (and sometimes books).
- How does it work?
    - Generous people with institutional access gave credentials to Alexandra Elbakyan (the founder), which are used to access papers. If a paper has been searched for and retrieved before, it is stored in a server so that all future requests for it are fulfilled instantaneously.
- Has Sci-Hub obtained credentials through phishing or other nefarious methods?

    - Despite uncorroborated accusations of such, there is no evidence of this.
- What is Library Genesis?
    - (Wikipedia link) tl;dr — a website that hosts user-uploaded books and articles.
- Is this illegal?
    - Depends on your definition. Some notes here.

GUIDE TO FINDING AN ARTICLE (sci-hub.se)

1. Locate the DOI (digital object identifier) of the article if possible (not all articles have DOIs). The URL of the article on the publisher's website may work if the article does not have a DOI.
2. Paste the DOI into Sci-Hub's text bar and click Open.
3. You may be prompted to enter a CAPTCHA. Do not be alarmed if the text is in Cyrillic—it's simply telling you to type in the characters in the image to prove that you are a human.
4. Sci-Hub will either produce the paper or inform you that it does not have access to it.

NOTES/FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ERRORS

- Sometimes you will get a 500 Internal Server Error or 504 Gateway Time-out. In most cases, this means that Sci-Hub has the paper, but the server is temporarily overloaded. Refreshing the page a few times ought to fix this (you may have to re-enter CAPTCHA's with every refresh). If it doesn't work immediately, you can try again a bit later too.
- Sometimes papers on Philosophy Documentation Center (PDCNet) and other databases are *also* on JSTOR, Project Muse, etc., which are typically accessible by Sci-Hub. If you suspect that this is the case, check Google Scholar for all the places that your paper is hosted and try the non-PDCNet links in Sci-Hub.
- Does Sci-Hub work on mobile?
    - Yes! Plug in the URL or DOI as you would on desktop. There is also a Telegram bot.
- Can I search by title on Sci-Hub?
    - This used to be a functionality through an installable plugin but now appears to have been discontinued. Find the article's DOI, and if none exists, use the URL to the article. You can, however, search Library Genesis by title (click Scientific Articles).
- If I am looking for a book chapter, will Sci-Hub help?
    - Sometimes. With SpringerLink books, Sci-Hub often has the whole book. Other times if you plug in the DOI of a chapter, it will direct you to the Library Genesis listing for the book. But the bulk of the material on Sci-Hub is articles.
- Sci-Hub is blocked by my Internet Service Provider/institution/etc.—what should I do?

    - Use Tor or Opera or Windscribe (or any virtual private network) to circumvent this easily—all free and easy to set up.
- I can't read Cyrillic. What do I do?
    - Copy-paste the text into a translator. Google Chrome has built-in translation.
- Which platforms does Sci-Hub have access to? Which does it not?
    - There's no official list, but this is what can be noted from experience: Taylor and Francis Online, SpringerLink, PEP Web, SagePub, Wiley Online, ScienceDirect, Oxford University Press, Cambridge Core (for books, must use individual chapters' DOIs/URLs), ScienceDirect (most papers), JSTOR (for some papers), De Gruyter (for some papers), Brill (for some papers), Project Muse (for some chapters—must use individual chapter DOI's), Oxford Scholarship Online (for some chapters—must use individual chapter DOI's), Philosophy Documentation Center, ProQuest, HeinOnline, MIS Quarterly. NOTE: just because you find an article hosted on one of these red sites, that does not necessarily mean it's not on Sci-Hub, because often articles are on multiple databases (e.g., both Project Muse and JSTOR). That's why it can sometimes be useful to try multiple URLs.
- I am in search of a rather obscure work. Will Sci-Hub have it?
    - As implied in the above question, Sci-Hub's access is independent of how mainstream or obscure the piece is. It depends on which database it is in (and, with some databases, whether it is in a subset of the database to which Sci-Hub has access). So, try; you may be surprised.
- How can it be that Sci-Hub has *partial* access to some platforms?
    - Because universities subscribe to subsets of platforms too. (That is why, for example, one can access some JSTOR papers with a particular university's institutional access but not others.) So, Sci-Hub's particular subset of access is determined by the credentials it has.
- I have access to a database that Sci-Hub doesn't yet have access to. Can I help improve Sci-Hub?
    - Hopefully! Try emailing Alexandra Elbakyan or sending her a Facebook message.

GUIDE TO FINDING A BOOK (libgen.is)

1. Search by title, ensuring that **Non-fiction / Sci-tech** is the selected option (if indeed you are searching for a monograph—adjust accordingly if you are searching for fiction, etc.).
2. Click the correct result. If there isn't one, Library Genesis does not have your book (yet).
3. Click the cover image of the book..
4. Click GET (or any of the IPFS links).
5. Your PDF/EPUB/DjVu/MOBI is now downloaded. Enjoy!

NOTES/FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ERRORS

- What's DjVu? Why is my PDF reader not opening it?
    - A file format similar to PDF. Most PDF readers cannot open it. Simply use an online tool like this one to convert it to PDF.
- What's EPUB/MOBI?
    - eReader formats which, unlike PDF, are not paginated. Thus, conversion to PDF is possible, but the pagination will be quasi-arbitrary, and the formatting won't be so nice. Best to read these on an eReader like calibre.
- Upon searching, I'm getting "User 'libgen_read' has exceeded the 'max_user_connections' resource"?
    - Like the aforementioned 500 Internal Server error with Sci-Hub, this is a server-side error. Refreshing the page, or waiting a minute and searching again usually resolves it.
- Library Genesis is blocked by my Internet Service Provider/institution/etc.—what should I do?
    - As with Sci-Hub, use Tor or Opera or Windscribe (or any virtual private network) to circumvent this easily—all free and easy to set up.
- Does Library Genesis also have articles?
    - Yes. Click on **Scientific articles** (or any of the other options below the search bar) on the home page to access these.
- Can I upload a book to Library Genesis?
    - Yes! Just go to library.bz/main/upload (username: genesis, password: upload) and you will see the rules and instructions (e.g., no watermarks, only certain formats, etc.) for doing so there. You can remove watermarks with Adobe Acrobat Pro, and you can remove DRM with this (VitalSource ePub instructions here).
- The website is asking me for a username and password? Why?
    - The username is genesis and the password is upload. Library Genesis recently has an upload queue for quality purpose control, so new uploads that have yet to clear the queue can only be accessed through library.bz, which is password-protected. After clearing the queue (which usually doesn't take longer than a day), they can be accessed at the regular site.
- I'm getting a 401 error (on the .bz site)?
    - Don't use Facebook Preview. You must use a proper browser.

OTHER RESOURCES

Nexus Telegram Bot

- Very useful Telegram bot (t.me/libgen_scihub_2_bot) to which you can send literature requests by text search or DOI. If you request something is not available, the request gets sent over to the channel t.me/nexus_aaron. Anyone can fulfill the request there by simply

replying to it with the file. If that happens, you will be notified by the first bot. And if your item is available via LibGen, Sci-Hub or the bot's own private collection, it will reply with a download button.

WorldCat

- Useful catalog of books and their holdings in libraries around the world. Very useful in determining whether or not a native (i.e., published by the publisher, not scanned) eBook of a particular title exists. Search the title and then narrow by eBook in the left sidebar, and then click on the result to see which databases have the eBook.

Google Scholar

- Useful for finding all the places a paper may be published. Often a paper behind a paywall is freely available elsewhere, and Google Scholar usually lists the link.

Google

- Obvious but nonetheless often overlooked. Use quotation marks (which search for an exact phrase) to narrow down your results. Sometimes a Google search will reveal places a paper is hosted that were not indexed by Google Scholar (perhaps because they are not "scholarly" websites). A common one is Scribd, which, contrary to popular belief, is *not* behind a paywall—one can use DownScribd to download from there or create a free account and upload any document in order to download something.

Internet Archive

- Has lots of older books, academic and non-academic. Free account required to borrow books, which can be viewed in Adobe Digital Editions. They are protected by Digital Rights Management (DRM) that forces them to be readable only inside Adobe Digital Editions, but the DRM is easily removable. If a book says "Borrow unavailable," that usually just means that someone else has currently borrowed it. Refresh the page later (e.g., in an hour or so) and it should be available.
- **Instructions for downloading books for which a 14 day loan is available:**
    - Create a free account on the Internet Archive.
    - Borrow the book and click Download Encrypted PDF (or EPUB, if you prefer EPUB). An .acsm file will download. Now proceed to the de-DRM'ing instructions below.
- **Instructions for downloading books for which a one-hour loan is available:**
    - Create a free account on the Internet Archive.
    - Borrow the book.

    - In a new tab, copy and paste (don't hit Enter yet): https://archive.org/services/loans/loan/?action=media_url&identifier=**XYZ**&format=pdf&redirect=1
    - Replace **XYZ** with the bookID: the alphanumeric string after **/details/** in the URL of the book's main page on the Internet Archive. You can also replace **pdf** with **epub** in the URL if you prefer EPUB format.
    - Now hit Enter. An .acsm file (corresponding to the chosen book and format) will be downloaded when you load this URL.
    - Proceed to the de-DRM'ing instructions below.
- **Instructions for de-DRM'ing downloaded books:**
    - Download and install the latest version of calibre. Alternatively, you can download and install Epubor Ultimate for Mac or ePUBee for Windows.
    - If you choose to use calibre, download this de-DRM plugin for calibre.
    - Download and install Adobe Digital Editions.
    - Open the .acsm file you have downloaded from the Internet Archive in Adobe Digital Editions (double-clicking it should suffice). Don't worry if it doesn't display properly.
    - Locate the PDF (or EPUB) file that was downloaded by the .acsm file by right-clicking the book in Adobe Digital Editions (you may have to click the back arrow to return to Adobe Digital Editions' main screen) and selecting Show File in Explorer (Windows) or Show File in Finder (Mac).
    - Drag the PDF (or EPUB) that you found in Finder/Explorer to calibre (or the other software, if you chose one of those).
    - For calibre users: click "Click to open" next to "Path" in the calibre sidebar to locate the imported PDF (or EPUB) file of the book once it has finished importing. For users of the other software: you should get a message saying that the file has been de-DRM'ed, and you can now locate that file in Finder/Explorer.
    - This file should now be DRM-free. If you wish, you can verify this by opening it in any PDF (or EPUB) application. (Attempting to do the same thing with the previously-located PDF (or EPUB) file straight from Adobe Digital Editions ought to yield blank pages or an error.)
    - Return the book on the Internet Archive wepbage (so that others can borrow it).
    - Bonus: upload the de-DRM'ed book to Library Genesis (instructions in the Library Genesis FAQ above) so that others seeking the same book do not have to go through the same rigmarole!

ProQuest Ebook Central (URL: https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/your-institution's ProQuest-handle)

- Extremely useful database that has a multitude of books. Search for ProQuest Ebook Central in the databases section of your university's library catalog to navigate to the proper URL (it differs by school). Click Download Book, download Adobe Digital Editions (as prompted), and then click download to get an .acsm file which Adobe Digital Editions will open to download a DRM-protected EPUBs or PDFs onto your computer. From here, you can use any de-DRM tool (e.g., this one) and drag-and-drop the DRM'ed PDF/EPUB (you can right-click it in Adobe Digital Editions to reveal the file path) into the de-DRM tool. If this file now opens in your ordinary PDF or EPUB reader, then it is ready to be uploaded to Library Genesis and shared.

Z-Library

- An online library similar to Library Genesis. Rarely have I encountered something there that was not on Library Genesis. (New uploads to Library Genesis are typically automatically uploaded to Z-Library, hence why it shows up on the list of mirrors for most books on Library Genesis and hence why it's often redundant to check Z-Library if you've already checked Library Genesis.)

Memory of the World

- An online library similar to Library Genesis.

AAAAARG (Artists, Architects, and Activists Reading Group)

- Invite-only database of books, mostly humanities. Blocked in the United States and Canada but easily circumvented by Tor (configure the routing file to consistently go through a European country, for example) or a VPN. I can invite anyone interested: just message me your email address.

Perlego

- Database of textbooks and other academic works. Download instructions here.

Ask for PDFs from People with Institutional Access

- A Facebook group with a self-explanatory title. Here's their information guide and resource list.

The Philosophical Underclass

- A Facebook group similar to Ask for PDFs from People with Institutional Access but restricted to philosophy.

reddit r/Scholar

- A subreddit similar to Ask for PDFs from People with Institutional Access.